

**TOWN OF UNDERHILL
ENERGY COMMITTEE
Underhill Town Hall
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, Jan 10, 2018**

Meeting called to Order 6:35 pm

Quorum established: Underhill Energy Committee (UEC) members in attendance: Peter Bennett (PB), Nicole Bourassa (NB), Dwight DeCoster (DD), Jerry Adams (JA), Tom Moore (TM)

Also attending: Steve Webster (SW) former UEC member, as consultant to UEC on solar

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Reviewed/Approved Minutes from Dec 13, 2017

No changes; motion by NB to approve; passed unanimously

Town energy plan

Committee agreed that it would be valuable to compare notes with other towns re their experience with developing a town energy plan

Solar Landfill Proposal by Green Lantern Development (GLG)

PB reported that the Select Board has been too busy with end of year issues including the budget to discuss the proposal but he expected to be able to have an exchange with them prior to the next UEC meeting.

SW has talked to a number of developers and reports that the size of this proposed array is too small to be attractive to many of them. However two other developers are interested in taking a look at the site: Peak Electric and Norwich Solar Technology. SW will contact them to see if they want to do a site visit.

PB asked for clarification of the motion passed in the last meeting recommending that the SB move ahead with GLG. He asked if the wording should be modified since there are still some unanswered questions regarding the proposal.

TM suggested that given that two more solar developers had evidenced an interest, that the UEC wait until we get that information before a recommendation. The committee passed a motion for the chair to inform the SB what the status with GLG is, that we feel they offer the best option at this time but we would like to know what additional information or steps might be required before the SB signs the proposal Option.

JA stated that he feels we need a better map from GLG showing more details of the proposal. The committee agreed that he should pursue this. They also agreed that he should send the latest information on Well #6 to GLG in the interests of transparency and to explain why the committee feels that a solar array as proposed is far enough away that there would be little effect on this well. He will send these results to Sam Carlson of GLG.

PB reported that there has been no feedback from the Conservation Commission on the well data.

The UEC reviewed the possibility and benefits from replacing the bulk of heating of the town garage by propane to a heat pump(s). SW had taken a closer look at cost and amount of propane used by the garage and that replacing it with heat pump(s) looked marginally beneficially, approximately \$1400 after realizing the savings from energy credits from the solar array. It was agreed that we need to check the cost figures we have.

The committee discussed the other complications pertaining to energy projects at the garage including flaws with the roof insulation and other issues regarding how the garage uses heat.

Review of Button Up Project

DD reported that the first event under the Button Up project in Underhill was successful but could have been better attended. He suggested and the committee agreed that additional forums on other topics should be organized and fell generally into two categories:

- energy technology available such as heat pumps, hot water technology, smarter appliances.
- specific home owner options on weatherization.

The Committee expressed support for this approach. DD pointed out that for a group of middle income home owners the options for affording weatherization were few and that we should think about how to address this problem.

Facebook page for UEC

NB explained that this could be a useful way to reach Underhill residents on energy issues and events. The technology – establishing the page and putting content on it was fairly straightforward. SW stated that he believed this could be effective but only if the committee was diligent in keeping fresh information on the page.

NB agreed to take first steps to getting this underway.

Committee Operations

PB asked the committee to review a new statement of the UEC mission statement. Members were in agreement but SW suggested we should add one more item stating that we encouraged the community to move towards the use of renewable energy. JA and PB expressed dissatisfaction with “renewable” as it is used in the energy field. A compromise on wording was arrived at by using “clean sources of low carbon energy” instead.

A motion to accept the new mission statement with this modification was made and passed unanimously.

TM mentioned that if any members wished to attend the Better Building by Design Conference that low cost tickets were available for energy committees and that the UEC budget would cover the cost. He and DD plan to attend and will report back to the UEC.

Next regularly scheduled meeting – Feb 14, 2018

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by

Peter Bennett